

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 7:00 PM

Their Year in Birding
Larry Nigro and Molly Donahue



Larry Nigro

Hawaiian Honeycreeper

Register for this month's program on the MAS website's Speaker Series page.

In 2024, Larry and Molly planned a transcontinental birding trip from Fairfax to Key West Florida to identify at least 700 species in the American Birding Association (ABA) They added a trip to Alaska, with the chance of identifying a total of 800 species.

In their presentation, Larry and Molly will relive their favorite birding moments of 2024, from the cliffs of the Alaskan Pribilof Islands to the southern tip of the Florida Keys. Their slideshow will cover their search for birds such as the Golden-winged Warbler, Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Masked Booby, and so many more.

Larry Nigro is a former Marin County school teacher. His birding started with taking his students on bird walks. Now retired, he has completed the Master Birding and California Naturalist Programs.

Molly Donahue is an educator from West Marin. She has been exploring the Marin hills since she was a child and now loves to bird with her husband, Larry Nigro. She is a certified California Naturalist. Both she and Larry have participated in the Marin County Bird Breeding Atlas.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9 7:00 PM

Aves Argentina — Restoring Balance Between People and Nature
Hernan Casanas

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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Annual Report for FY 2024-25

MAS's fiscal year 2024-25 has been challenging and rewarding. We advanced knowledge of birds by sponsoring the Breeding Bird Atlas and Christmas Bird Counts, broadened the understanding of birds and the natural world through our 10 Speaker Series programs, our advocacy work, and the 46 field trips we sponsored. We continued our conservation activities, working to protect native wildlife and habitat, throughout Marin County. We've had to deal with growing governmental attacks on our natural resources, with the increased efforts to weaken environmental protections and benefits coming from both the national and state levels. Our Property Management Committee focused on enhancement of habitats on our properties, and we participated in equity programs with multicultural communities.

In all, 446 volunteers contributed a total of 13,052 hours on Marin Audubon activities, including the Southern Marin and Cheep Thrills Christmas Count, Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas 2, and Marin Baylands Advocates. We couldn't get numbers for the Point Reyes Count in time for our deadline — will include next time. We are grateful to our

volunteers for their contributions to our work, science, understanding of the natural world, and status of birds at this time of climate change and sea-level rise. We literally couldn't do it without you, our members. We are an all-volunteer organization, hiring experts only to help design and construct our restoration projects and crews to help maintain our properties.

We are thrilled to have received a large bequest from Maureen Groper of half of an IRA, which is enabling us to make a significant contribution to purchasing the bayland parcels (see below). Maureen left the other half of the IRA to Marin Baylands Advocates which is also contributing it to the purchase.

MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES
CLIMATE CHANGE/SEA-LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION
and UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project Construction of the Tiscornia project has been delayed yet another year due to PG&E's assertion that our project would impact their transmission tower located on MAS property. As a result, we've had to reduce the size of the coarse beach, eliminate the beneficial reuse of dredged material, and

continued on page 4

Pending – Two Bayland Property Purchases

We're excited to announce that MAS has signed a purchase and sales agreement with the Leveroni family to buy two large diked bayland parcels just north of the Rush Creek Open Space Preserve in unincorporated Novato. For many years, the parcels have been used as grazing lands for cows, and a small section of one of the properties has been leased to a landscaping business. These parcels are the largest remaining bayland sites in private ownership along the Marin shore of the Petaluma River. Over the coming months, we will be doing our due diligence to make sure the properties do not have problems that would change our minds about owning them.

And we'll be raising funds to complete the purchase. More in next month's newsletter.

FARALLONES DONORS SAVE THE DAY

It is with great relief that we announce that, thanks to several large last-minute donations as well as many smaller donations, Point Blue will be able to keep scientists on the Farallones during the non-breeding season next fall and winter. This means their research will continue and, with their presence on the Islands, the birds, mammals, and habitat will be protected from vandals. Thank you to all who donated to keep the Islands safe.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phone numbers are in the 415 area code unless otherwise noted. Questions? Please contact the appropriate Board member.

President	Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Vice President	Doug Waterman dglswtrmn@gmail.com
Secretary	Lelia Lancot 924-6138
Treasurer	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
Conservation	Barbara Salzman 924-6057 MJ Schramm maryjane.Schramm@gmail.com
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Membership Chair	Bob Hinz 383-8688 Contact Bob for membership problems or questions.
Outreach, Media	Open
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Project Management	Jude Stalker 680-6291
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BAAC Reps	Barbara Salzman 924-605 Doug Waterman newsletter@marinaudubon.org
At-large Director	Lowell Sykes 388-2821

DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Meetings open to members. 6:30 PM, First Tuesday of the month. Meetings are currently held online via Zoom. If you wish to participate please call 924-6057.

MAS telephone: 721-4271 (for messages only)
Marin Audubon Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Website: www.marinaudubon.org

Members can receive *The Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by emailing membershipsecretary@marinaudubon.org.

DONATIONS APPRECIATED!

Marin Audubon Society welcomes gifts of funds, stock, or property, and bequests in general, or in honor or memory of someone. Gifts may be directed to any MAS project. Unspecified gifts of more than \$500 will be placed in the Endowment Fund for conservation, the protection of wildlife species, and the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats. Since MAS is an all-volunteer organization, 100% of your donation goes to its projects. All gifts are tax-deductible and will be acknowledged in *The Rail*, as well as personally on behalf of the Society. Checks should be made out and mailed to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

President's Letter

By Barbara Salzman

We've been busy over the summer, but we don't have space in this issue of the newsletter to give all of our activities (conservation, acquisition and stewardship) adequate coverage. More complete reports will come in future issues.

I hope everyone is having a delightful summer. Although the weather has been wonderful, much has happened that was disheartening: more funding withdrawals, weakening of regulations, disruption of programs, and attacks on natural resources. One of the saddest things was the loss of smart, dedicated, knowledgeable federal agency staff who have worked with commitment to protect our environment and wildlife. But we've been fortunate in some ways. Although the major EPA grant for the Bay has been cancelled, there is still some EPA funding for projects we are involved with.

Also boosting our spirits is the really wonderful news that donations are enabling Point Blue staff to remain on the Farallones for the coming non-breeding season, and the exciting opportunity we have to purchase 323.28 acres of baylands along the Petaluma River. (See more information on page 1)

One conservation concern, raised locally by the driveway project at 800 Corte Madera Avenue, is the potential loss of a large number of trees (41 native trees in this case) based on anxiety about fire. Although this project ultimately was denied by the Corte Madera Town Council, the issue is likely to come up again with other projects. Here, the application reportedly began with a narrow road that was widened to 16 feet upon the recommendation of the fire department and Town code. Then, a well-known tree company evaluated the trees and recommended the removal of all 47 trees within the driveway footprint. How about that for a coincidence! Several other tree companies agreed either explicitly or by not objecting. The evaluation criteria were superficial, such as "leaning to reach the sun." To be saved, a tree needed to be mature but not too old, have no holes, straight posture, no signs of weakness, and not be in the footprint of the driveway.

A huge "thank you" to all generous donors to our Spring Appeal. The contributions are at work already: sheet-mulching to remove harding grass at Simmons, watering and weeding at Bahia, and having native plants grown for planting next winter at Corte Madera, Bahia and Simmons. Donations are also helping to hire crews to remove the non-native *Limonium* at the Ecological Reserve in Corte Madera and other places around the county.

We have an open seat on the Board. If you are interested in joining our Board of Directors and taking on a more active role with Marin

Audubon, and would like more information, contact us and let us know how you would like to help out with our activities and further our mission.

We're planning interesting field trips and programs this fall, beginning in September—do join us!

THANK YOU, DONORS

Daniel Altman, Michael Anderson, Annette Anzalone, Arnold, P. Atkinson, Janet Babb, Richard Bass, Tom & Sherry Baty, Klaus Beyer, Mark Birnbaum, Greg Block, Andrew Bollen, Juliana Bonicalzi, Edgar Bowron, Sharon Bozic, Ann Brenner, Deborah Brown, Faith Brown, Leslie Brown, Carol Budzinski, Kathleen Burke, Corliss Chan, Darlene Choy, Rich Cimino, James Cleaves, Wayne Cooper, Greg & Costopoulos & Teri Hollowell, John Crawford, Robert & Travis Darcy, Nusi Dekker, Judi & Bob Desmond, Brett Elebash, Leslie Ellison, Louis & Tamara Fehrenbacher, Laurel Feigenbaum, David Fiol & Stacey Pogorzelski, Anice Flesh, Roberta Floden, Lewis Fredrickson, Alexis & Larry Friedman, Ann Frivold, Nancy Frost, Richard Gale, Tom & Barbara Garman, Jennifer Gellini, Mary Gleim, Francine Goodman, Carl & Donna Gowan, John & Paula Granucci, Thomas & Marilyn Guerin, Betsy & Gary Gullickson, Nancy Prince Hanson, Charisse & Michael Heath, Jane Hicks, Douglas Howell, Paula & Russell Hunt, Susan Ives, Susan Lee Janson, Martha & Gerry Jarocki, Bonnie & Peter Jensen, The Jewel Foundation, Denis Jones, Barbara & Jim Kautz, Diane Kelly, David Kimball & Anne Taylor, Jeffrey Kimball, Elizabeth King, Michelle & Kenneth Kitlas, Jane Knowles, Barbara Kriz, Lelia Lancot, Judith Lichterman, Patricia Lowrie, Theani Louskos, John & Nancy MacPherson, Ron Mallory, Daniel Mardesich, Daphne Markham, Bonnie Miller & Bob Marks, Nancy Marshall, Sharon McCloskey, Michael McDaniel, Prem McMurdo, Marc Medoff, Mark Milberg, Rick Misuraca, Richard Morrison, Margaret Moster, Eileen Murray, Patrick Murray, Geraldine & James Nardi, Linda Nicoletto, Frank & Lois Noonan, Rebecca Oliver, J Morrow Otis, Alison Pence, Phil Peterson, Steve Piatek & Meg Rosegay, Bob & Dony Powell, Flinn Moore Rauck, Vivian Reyes, John & Susan Ristow, Georg Roth, Anne Ruben, Susan Ryan, Scammel Consulting, Charlotte Scherman, Larry & Lynda Scheibel, Erica Schrey, Richard Scott, David & Nadine Sexton, Jill Sideman, Sandra Slichter, Cary Sparks, Jeanine Stareritt, Livia Stone, Shipa Tilwalli, Wyatt Toolson, Valerie Van Dahl, Marion Weeks, David Wimpfheimer, Kristin Womack, Brenda & Victor Wong

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

MAS is providing a full schedule of free field trips for the 2024–2025 season.

Registration is required for most of our trips with size limits to prevent overcrowding. Registration will open 10 days prior to the trip date on the Marin Audubon website's Field Trips page.

Trips can fill up quickly. If a trip is closed when you try to register, use the "contact organizer" and request to be put on the waiting list. If you are unable to attend a trip you signed up for, use "Contact Organizer" to cancel so that someone on the waiting list will have an opportunity to attend.

In some instances, trip signups aren't available precisely at 8 AM but it doesn't mean the trip is full. PLEASE TRY TO REGISTER AGAIN A FEW MINUTES LATER.

THE PONDS AT THE LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD) San Rafael

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Thursday, October 2, 2025

8:30 AM to noon

With Mark Clark

Registration is not required. All participants are welcome to join this trip.

On this trip we especially welcome beginning birders to join Mark Clark, along with bird enthusiasts of all levels, on our first Thursday of the month walk around the ponds at Las Gallinas. On our search we'll be looking for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors, rails and swallows. We are likely to spot some interesting species, so come assist in our search.

The packed dirt paths around the ponds are wide, flat and easy to navigate. Heavy rain cancels. There is a portable restroom in the parking area for public use.

DIRECTIONS: Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and drive about 0.5 mile through the LGVSD gates and into the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot.

POINT REYES LIGHTHOUSE TO DRAKES BEACH

Birding in Marin, Season 10 – Trip 9

Saturday, September 6, 2025

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Registration required for this trip. Registration opens on August 27 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

This is the place to be for fall birding. Migrants like hawks, jaegers, shorebirds and loons follow the coast south. While a great many songbirds also leave their nesting grounds to head south, some get lost. These vagrant warblers and other eastern songbirds are the reasons that the tree islands of the Point Reyes peninsula are so popular with birders.

We intend to visit the nearby Fish Docks after The Lighthouse then work our way back to Drake's Beach for lunch and more birding. Bring lunch and drinks. Restrooms available at Drakes's Beach.

DIRECTIONS: Meet at 8:30 at the Lighthouse parking area. The Lighthouse parking area is at the west end of Sir Francis Drake. Going north through Inverness follow Sir Francis Drake to the Lighthouse. Allow 30 minutes from Inverness or 1.5 hour from San Rafael.

Rodeo Lagoon and Marin Headlands

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

7:30/8:15 AM to noon

With William Legge and David Wiechers

Registration required for this trip. Registration opens on September 7 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Join William and David for this third fall migration field trip at Rodeo Lagoon. This is their long-time "patch," which never seems to disappoint birders with daily variations in species and a good chance of an unusual sighting. On this trip, our group will be targeting **Parasitic Jaeger**, migrating shorebirds and scarcer migrant passerines. We will begin the morning with a Sea Watch from Rodeo Beach at 7:30 AM. Those arriving later may join us at 8:15 AM for a circuit of the lagoon. A brief mid-morning "coffee stop" is planned at the Headlands Center for the Arts and it would be appreciated if participants come willing to contribute via the onsite "tip jar" as a thank you to the Headlands Center for the Arts for accommodating our group. This field trip is less suitable for beginners.

DIRECTIONS: Head south on Hwy 101 and take the last Sausalito exit just before the Golden Gate Bridge. At the exit stop sign, turn right and go under the freeway, then follow the road down to the left. Within 300 feet turn left at the sign to the Marin Headlands (This is the only available left turn before you begin the descent into Sausalito). You should see the tunnel with the five-minute light. Proceed through the tunnel on Bunker Rd to the Rodeo Lagoon Parking Lot at the end. Meet by the bridge over the channel to the beach or join MAS birders with scopes along the nearby beach area.

VAUX'S SWIFTS AT MCNEAR BRICK AND BLOCK

San Rafael

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

5:30 PM to sunset

With Rich Cimino

Registration is required for this trip. Registration opens September 14 on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Join other MAS members for an evening opportunity to witness Vaux's Swifts during their fall migration through Marin, which occurs in September and October. Dan McNear of McNear Brick & Block has kindly allowed Marin Audubon to access this remarkable site where decommissioned smokestacks provide an important communal roosting place for the swifts.

Watching thousands of swifts as they descend into the stacks just before nightfall is an unforgettable sight. At the peak of migration, as many as 19,000 swifts have been counted in one evening. However, keep in mind that the number of swifts varies greatly from night to night and can range from a few hundred to thousands. Like everything else in birding, there are no guarantees!

Sunset on the evening of our visit will be at 7:03 PM, so plan on arriving on time to be ready. If the weather on the day of our trip is particularly cool or windy, the swifts are likely to enter the stacks early, so plan accordingly. Bring scopes, binoculars, and, if desired, folding chairs for your seating comfort. It can be chilly at dusk. Please stay with our group and do not enter any of the private areas on the property. Use soft voices and be sure to respect the privacy of local residents.

Upon arrival, meet inside the yard by the office building on the right side of the parking lot, where you will be checked in from the registration list.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 take the Central San Rafael exit. Head east on Third St./Point San Pedro Rd for about 3.5 miles. The brickyard will be on the right. The address is 1 McNear Brickyard Rd. Park as close to the San Pedro Road entrance as possible. Please do not drive to or park near the closed gate.

ABBOTTS LAGOON AND THE INVERNESS TENNIS AREA

Birding in Marin, Season 10 – Trip 10

Saturday, October 4, 2025

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

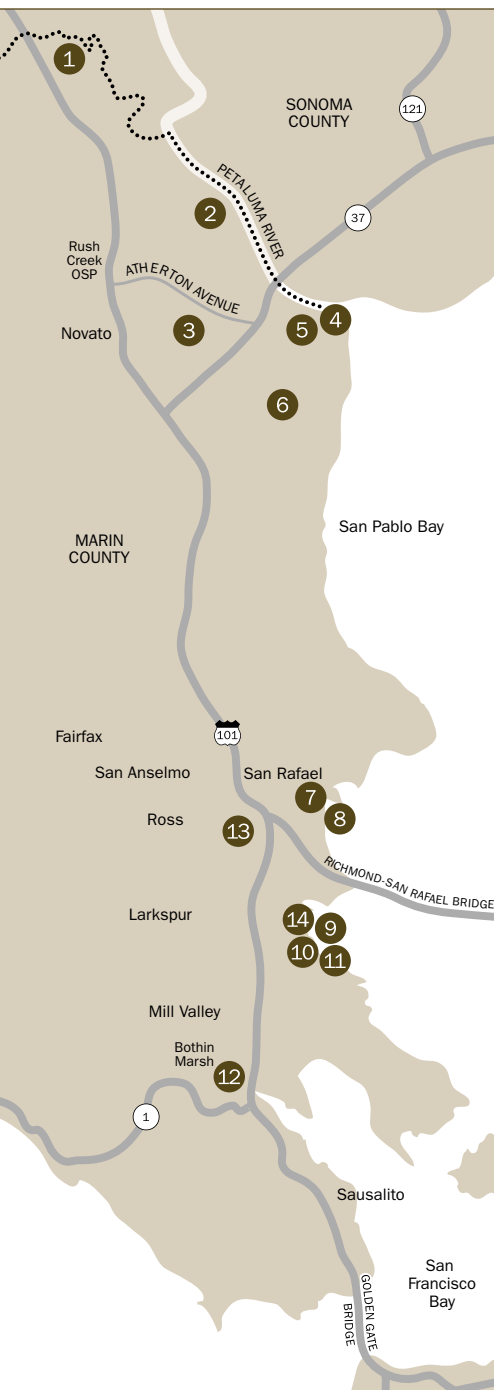
With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Registration required for this trip. Registration opens on September 24 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Abbotts Lagoon on the Pacific Coast in the Point Reyes National Seashore is one of Marin's premier birding locations, sporting an eBird sum of 283 species. Fall migration south along the coast brings many birds to this area. Some that we hope to see include **Ferruginous Hawk, Red-necked Phalaropes, Lapland Longspur, Horned Lark** and **Pipits**. Hundreds of ducks of a dozen species, geese, herons, **Peregrines** and **Ospreys** are also likely visitors. Plus, you get some exercise; out and back is about two miles (some in sand). Pack a lunch for a picnic on the beach and bring a couple of layers for the fresh ocean air and help us spot a rarity.

After leaving Abbotts Lagoon, we plan to stop along Tomales Bay near the Inverness Tennis Club to look for Pine and Alder woodland birds. A surprising number of species have been seen here and there is a nice little beach where we usually find several kinds of gulls.

DIRECTIONS: From Point Reyes Station, on Hwy. 1 go just south of town, and turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Follow that thru Inverness, up over Inverness ridge into the Point Reyes National Seashore, then go north on Pierce Point Road. The Abbotts Lagoon parking lot is on the left, after about three miles. Carpool if you can, allow 1.5 hours from San Rafael.



Annual Report

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reduce the acreage of tidal marsh that will be restored. We're continuing to refine the project design, and we're currently working with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority and San Rafael to finalize language in the required landowner agreements. The purpose of the project has not changed: to restore tidal marsh for endangered and other wildlife, increase flood protection, and protect the shoreline by improving the levee, marsh, and adding a public trail. The Multicultural Center of Marin continues to reach out to residents about the Tiscornia project and sea-level rise. A grant from the SF Bay Restoration Authority is funding this phase of the project.

Regionally Advancing Living Shorelines

We are pleased to have been awarded a Coastal Conservancy grant to manage three Marin project sites, along the Corte Madera and San Rafael shorelines and at the Estuary and Ocean Science Center, to advance living shoreline designs. The Living Shorelines project includes sites in San Francisco and the East Bay, in addition to the three in Marin. It will produce designs for each of the sites and address permitting. The project is intended to be a model for future projects, encouraging them to use living shoreline (or natural) features by making it easier to use them.

ACQUISITIONS

Leveroni Properties We're excited to have signed a purchase and sales agreement to acquire two diked bayland properties located between Rush Creek Marsh and Gnos Field Airport.

Chapter 8 Purchases of Three Small Parcels in Default on Taxes at Black Point Thanks to Marin Baylands Advocates for identifying the parcels and funding their purchase. Our goal at Black Point is to combine parcels to protect larger blocks of habitat.

Novato Creek Baylands Strategy

Environmental Science Associates (ESA), San Francisco Estuary Institute and Partnership, and Marin County Public Works continue the task of developing alternatives for restoring tidal marsh on lower Novato Creek. MAS is involved.

ENHANCING HABITATS

Stewardship We actively maintain many of our habitats. We conducted Work Days at Triangle Marsh and our parcel at the Ecological Reserve in Corte Madera, where volunteers helped to enhance uplands adjacent to tidal marshes. At Simmons Slough, in North Marin, we're sheet mulching to control invasive harding grass and restore native habitat. Also in North Marin, at Bahia, we both removed invasive plants and installed natives to enhance levee habitat and seasonal wetlands. Grants

from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission and RHE Charitable Foundation helped us restore habitat at Bahia.

Limonium Removal In partnership with the California Invasive Plant Council and, this year, Marin County, MAS volunteers and a crew hired by MAS removed the invasive Limonium (*Limonium latifolium*) from along the Sausalito waterfront and at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

MORE PROTECTING HABITATS AND SPECIES

Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Protection

Program We continued a docent program in Central Marin, in partnership with the Marin County Open Space District. Our support for NSO was also reflected in our commenting on proposed developments and joining an amicus brief (see page 5).

LEGAL ACTIVITIES

Marin Water (MMWD) Lawsuit MAS, the California Native Plant Society, and the Marin Conservation League sued and won a court judgment that included dropping the Bicycle Trail Pilot Project, keeping a year-long pilot study of e-bikes on fire roads, and conducting plant and NSO surveys, and a study of potential impacts on bats.

Barred Owl Management Plan Lawsuit

We joined a lawsuit as an amicus (friend of the court) in support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Barred Owl Management Plan, which is at risk due to a suit brought by animal rights groups aiming to defeat its use.

CalPark Our countersuit, to ensure access to our diked wetland in this unincorporated San Rafael community, was settled with MAS retaining an access route to its property and gaining several small parcels.

Star Storage (formerly Deer Island Storage) This legal action, to clarify disputes about easements and boundaries on our Simmons property, is in ongoing negotiation.

Air Tour Lawsuit This action, to require the Department of the Interior and the FAA to prepare an environmental assessment of the impacts of tourist planes and helicopters flying over five Bay Area federal parks, was decided by the court in our favor. The National Park Service and FAA are required to prepare an Environmental Assessment. We were represented by the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIPS

MAS is fiscal sponsor for the **Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas 2**, now in its fifth year preparing for the final report on breeding birds in Marin, and for **Marin Baylands Advocates**, our partner in acquiring baylands for the last 30+ years.

MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

1. Petaluma Marsh Expansion Site	180 acres
2. Bahia	60 acres
3. Simmons Slough	144 acres
4. Norton Avenue Pond	4 parcels
5. Black Point Parcels	many parcels
6. Arroyo San Jose	2 parcels
7. Tiscornia Marsh	20 acres
8. Tidelands and Murphy's Rock	34 acres
9. San Clemente Creek Tidelands	4.34 acres
10. End of Channel Drive	1 acre
11. Triangle Marsh	31 acres
12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio	2 acres
13. Cal Park	<1 acre
14. Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Site	5.2 acres

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Christmas Bird Counts Again, we sponsored three Christmas Bird Counts: Southern Marin, Cheep Thrills (Novato area), and Point Reyes. Data from the counts is compiled and analyzed by the National Audubon Society to identify trends in bird populations. The Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas (see above) is also a citizen science project.

EDUCATION/OUTREACH

The Rail, Speaker Programs, and Field Trips continue to be the foundation of our education/outreach program, educating about birds and other natural resources. *The Rail* reports on our programs, conservation, bird sightings, and other matters of Audubon interest.

CONSERVATION

MAS’s advocacy focuses on protecting wildlife and their habitats. We comment on proposed development projects and planning and environmental review documents, testify at public meetings, participate in public and private processes, and take other actions, such as suing, with the goal of protecting natural resources, wildlife and their habitats. Projects we commented on during fiscal year 2024-25 included:

Legislation Lots of bills of concern this year. AB 303, limiting the development of battery storage facilities, was too overreaching for the legislators and so didn’t go anywhere. We opposed AB 697, to exempt State Route 37 from endangered species restrictions, and AB 607 and AB 131, which were designed to destroy CEQA.

Tomales Bay State Park Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Public Works Plan We commented in support of protecting Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) habitat at the Coastal Commission, as CA State Parks failed to ensure sufficient habitat will remain to support NSO and other special-status species.

Pattern Energy Company This company purchased the diked bayland property at the southeast corner of the intersection of Hwy. 101 and SR 37. We informed the company of our interest in purchasing. It was not interested in selling.

Farallon Islands We continued to advocate for protection of the Islands’ ecosystem before the Coastal Commission, and supported Point Blue both financially and through publicity to raise support for continued federal funding.

Fire We continued to work to limit the loss of understory habitat caused by the vegetation removal program, and to protect wildlife habitat by commenting at hearings and committee meetings.

State Route 37 Our involvement with this project continues. MAS supported approval of the segment from 101 over Novato Creek and urged that it be extended over Simmons Slough. We opposed Caltrans’ plan for an “interim” project on fill, from Hwy. 121 to Mare Island, because of impacts and the probability that it would never be removed.

Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District, Ferry and Parking Lot Project We submitted scoping comments focused on potential impacts of this project on the Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve.

Complete Streets Project, Corte Madera We are working to protect our Triangle Marsh property from impacts of this project, which will move Paradise Drive northward, closer to Triangle Marsh, thus eliminating parking and access to our property.

Nutria Removal Project We’ve granted a request from the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife to search our North Marin properties for this invasive rodent and remove them if they are found. The Department agreed to abide by conditions we set forth.

San Rafael Sea-Level Rise Feasibility Project Our input has been in opposition to a barrier across San Rafael Creek because of many adverse impacts.

Off-leash dogs at Piper Park, Larkspur We opposed changing Larkspur’s leash ordinance to allow off-leash dogs at Piper Park.

Aquaculture Project on Tomales Bay In the early stages of the project’s review by state agencies, we joined other organizations in opposing this proposal for an aquaculture farm in Tomales Bay.

BCDC Shoreline Adaptation Project We testified on this document, which sets forth guidelines and requirements for jurisdictions to prepare sea-level rise adaptation plans.

Glenwood Marsh The San Rafael School District declared this property surplus and issued a request for proposals to purchase it. MAS submitted a letter of interest, but the asking price was excessive, so we did not pursue the acquisition. As far as we know, the District has not yet sold the property.

Precedence Clauses We opposed this change in the county code, which allows increased density in baylands and other sensitive habitats. The supervisors approved the change on a 3-2 vote.

MAS REPRESENTATION ON COUNTY AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES
Lagunitas Creek Technical Advisory Committee (a MMWD committee) This was established under a requirement of the State Water Resources Control Board as mitigation for the Lagunitas dam.

Environmental Roundtable A Marin County Open Space District committee of environmental organizations that focuses on resource protection.

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Agencies and organizations working to protect wetlands for wildlife.

San Francisco Estuary Partnership Works to benefit the estuary in accord with the Estuary Blueprint.

Baylands Group Environmental groups organized to influence planning for State Route 37.

Marin Audubon Society Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2025	
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Operating Bank Accounts	88,452
Property Bank Accounts	202,183
Marin Baylands Advocates Bank Account	41,296
Breeding Bird Atlas Bank Account	68,247
Total Current Assets	400,178
Real Property	4,719,863
Investment Account	3,883,409
TOTAL ASSETS	\$9,003,450
Marin Audubon Society Statement of Activities July 2024 – June 2025	
REVENUE AND SUPPORT	
Donations	848,514
Grant Income for Property, Restoration, and Enhancement	275,372
Membership	35,260
Events and Activities	5,296
Interest and Dividend Income	55,047
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	904,914
Breeding Bird Atlas Income	63,008
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$2,187,411
EXPENSES	
Property Restoration, Enhancement, and Management	392,667
Professional Services	68,038
Office Supplies, Printing, and Postage	36,867
Program Expenses	8,850
Insurance	10,552
Property Parcel Taxes	14,000
Permits and Fees	1,820
Contributions	45,600
Other General Expenses	2,157
Marin Baylands Advocates Expenses	92,372
Breeding Bird Atlas Expenses	31,607
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$704,530
RESULTS FROM OPERATIONS	\$1,482,881
Investment Gain – Realized and Unrealized	143,914
CHANGE IN EQUITY	\$1,626,795
TOTAL EQUITY – BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$7,376,655
TOTAL EQUITY – END OF YEAR	\$9,003,450

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

It's late summer and very dry, but this is the time for a few invasive species to become more visible and to prepare to bloom. *Salsola soda* (opposite leaf Russian thistle, glasswort, or agretti) and *Dittrichia graveolens* (stinkwort) are two that we remove on our properties. Both are annuals and easy to pull but can form dense stands if left unmanaged. We have reduced *Dittrichia* to a very few plants at our Triangle and Corte Madera marsh properties. Bristly ox-tongue is a third invasive that we cut off or dig out. It blooms all summer.

On the other hand, coyote brush, gumweed, Pacific aster and *Euthamia occidentalis* (western goldentop), all native species, are also blooming.

If you appreciate our birds or native plants, volunteer on a workday to give them a boost. The native plants are much better for the insects that are food for the birds. Birds are declining in number and so are insects. It is also an opportunity to learn more about a native habitat of your county and be a part of improving it.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:
First Saturdays: September 6, October 4

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive between the Ring Mountain Phyllis Ellman trailhead and the Montessori School.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve:
Second Saturdays: September 13, October 11

Meet at the end of Industrial Way near Trader Joe's in Greenbrae.

For up-to-date information, contact Martha Jarocki, 415/461-3592 or marthajarocki@gmail.com.

Bahia, Novato:

If you'd like to help, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

Thank You, Stewardship Volunteers
Debbie Ablin, Annette Anzalone, Belle & Ron Guelden, Katrina Hanley, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Minnie McBride, Susan Meffert and Eiden Metcalfe, Alison Pence, Lowell Sykes

REPORT BARRED OWL SIGHTINGS

Barred Owls have extended their range to the west coast and have been seen in Marin. There is increasing concern about their impact on Marin's Northern Spotted Owl population. Barred Owls are larger, more aggressive and occupy the same habitat type as Spotted Owls. See contact list at marinaudubon.org/2020/09/01/alert-report-barred-owl-sightings.

Habitat Stewardship

SIMMONS SLOUGH BEQUEST

Jim Gonsman's bequest will benefit habitat at MAS's Simmons property, on Atherton Avenue in unincorporated Novato. Jim, a past MAS Treasurer, loved nature and native-plant habitat. After moving to Sonoma and leaving our board, he spent the rest of his life creating native-plant communities on his own property and on nearby public lands.

We decided to use his thoughtful bequest to benefit native-plant habitat on our Simmons Slough property, on Atherton

Avenue. We've used it to begin the process of restoring native species by sheet-mulching a large patch of harding grass on our bayland. This is the second patch on which we've used this technique. Last year, we successfully eliminated harding grass from another large area on the same property, and this coming rainy season we're planning to plant the native creeping wild rye (*Leymus triticoides*) in the area. The Conservation Corps North Bay crew and supervisor did an exceptional job installing the sheet mulch.

Conservation

PROJECT REVIEW AND COMMENT

We've been busy through the summer reviewing projects and commenting on them to protect habitat as follows:

800 Corte Madera Avenue, Corte Madera (former Bill Graham mansion) This project consisted of a 16-foot-wide, 445-foot-long second driveway to the private residence on this 11-acre property. The project would have required extensive grading and retaining walls up to 13-feet high. The major issue for MAS was that constructing the driveway would have required the removal of 47 trees, 41 of which were native bays, redwoods, and coast live oak. And the proposed mitigation, consisting of the replacement of 41 native trees with only 32, none of which were oaks, was inadequate. Also, the mitigation introduced two species that, although native, are not growing on the site. The Planning Commission approved the project, but the neighbors appealed it. On a 3-2 vote, the Town Council granted the appeal and denied the project. Hooray for the Corte Madera Town Council majority! MAS wrote several letters opposing the tree loss and supporting the appeal.

Stinson Beach Feasibility Study

In commenting on this study, we requested that more attention be given to protecting environmental resources, and that living shoreline features be recognized as being an important component in effective sea-level rise adaptations.

Buck Gulch Falls Habitat Restoration

MAS supported the riparian habitat and trail improvements. The work will include moving a section of the trail uphill, farther from the stream, and constructing several bridges and an overlook. These structures are designed to keep visitors out of the stream and the stream banks from being trampled so that vegetation can be restored.

Las Gallinas Sanitary District Cattail Removal Project

It's been six years since the last clearing of the cattails around the Las Gallinas Wildlife Pond, and the District, fortunately, has taken a different approach this time. They held two public meetings at which they welcomed public comments, and they were open to recommendations. As a result, they will be leaving wider sections of cattails in areas that are known to be important habitat for the Least Bittern, Common Yellowthroat, Western Pond Turtle, and other species. A five-foot-wide border of cattails will be left around the pond, with wider areas retained at the corners and eastern side. The primary reason for the removal is the high level of production of the Western Encephalitis Mosquito (*Culex tarsalis*), which carries West Nile virus, in the denser cattail areas. Removal will take place in late September and early October and is expected to last four weeks.

FOLLOW-UP ON MMWD LAWSUIT

There have been some comments in the Marin Independent Journal from bicycle interests complaining about our misuse of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), disappointing children, that the environmental groups acted in bad faith in bringing legal action, and that the bicycle Shared Trail Pilot project was harmless because it would have only lasted two years. And you may have read the MAS and CNPS Op-ed on our CEQA suit. In case you didn't, you need to know that our successful court action is a perfect example of CEQA functioning exactly the way it was intended—to make known to the public the potential impacts of projects so that resources can be protected.

At public meetings, before approval of the trail projects, members of the environmental community repeatedly requested discussion

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Marin Birdlog: May 2025

By Noah Arthur

Spring migration is in full swing in early May, with unusual western migrants usually highlighting the first couple weeks. This time things began with a **Bank Swallow** at Abbotts Lagoon on the 2nd (VS), and a **Swainson's Hawk** at Hall Ranch and **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Mendoza Ranch on the Outer Point on the 5th (DM).

A pelagic trip in Marin waters on the 5th turned up the rarest bird of the month, a **Wedge-tailed Shearwater** (PW), the second-ever spring record in the state; plus a **Hawaiian Petrel**. Interestingly, these two species are Hawaii's most common breeding tubenoses.

Another **Bank Swallow** was at Olompali State Park on the 7th (LN), and a **Lawrence's Goldfinch** showed up on the Outer Point at Drakes Beach on the 8th (JW), followed by 2 **Lawrence's Goldfinches** at Mendoza on the 10th (SH & VW). An exceptional rarity for the

Outer Point came on the 12th, an adult **Lewis's Woodpecker** knocking on a power pole at Mendoza (RW), which was then joined on the 14th by an **Acorn Woodpecker** (DS). Both rare woodpeckers lingered for a few days.

Also on the 14th, an exceptional Outer Point flock of 20 **American Crows** flew over Drakes Beach (DSe) heading southwest out the Point.

A singing **Yellow-breasted Chat** in the Giacomini Wetlands on the 15th (TP) added to the month's impressive pile of rare western migrants. A pair of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** along Pt. Reyes-Petaluma Rd. northwest of Mt. Burdell on the 16th (DH) were likely different individuals from the ones still present at south Mt. Burdell.

The first eastern migrant of the season came on the 18th in the form of a male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at a San Marin feeder (Anonymous eBirder). The 19th brought another **Bank Swallow**, this time at Rodeo Lagoon (WL), and another showed up at Las Gallinas on the 22nd (AB, BJS, SP). Two more **Yellow-breasted Chats** happened on the 21st, one at White House Pool (JA) and one at Muir Beach (DS).

An exceptionally late **Townsend's Warbler** was in Muir Beach on the 25th (CC & BB).

A singing hybrid **Rose-breasted X Black-headed Grosbeak** showed up at Rodeo Lagoon on the 27th, joined the next day in the same willows by a silent male **Rose-breasted** (both WL).

Another unseasonable winter passerine came on the 29th, an **American Pipit** at Rodeo Lagoon (WL). Rare on the sea coast in the spring, a **Long-billed Dowitcher** turned up on the Outer Point on the 30th at Mendoza Ranch and then the new pond at Drakes Beach (DS). Also rare at the Outer Point were a **Green Heron** at the Drakes big pond on the 30th (MT) and a **Common Gallinule** in the Drakes new pond on the 31st (DS).



Hammond's Flycatcher

Dominik Mosur CC BY-SA 2.0



Acorn Woodpecker

© Frank Schulenburg CC BY-SA 4.0



Long-billed Dowitcher

"Mike" Michael L. Baird, CC BY-SA 2.0

Conservation

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of Mt. Tamalpais' natural resources, plant communities, diversity of bird and wildlife species, and the possible impacts of recreational uses on these resources. Our requests were ignored. To ensure that impacts of the proposed potentially damaging pilot projects (bikes and e-bikes on shared trails) were considered before they were approved, we had no other choice but to take the legal action provided by CEQA.

Significant damage can be done to trails in two years, especially those that are already in poor condition (narrow, rutted, and poorly maintained), as many in the Pilot Project were.

The judge agreed with us that the CEQA exemptions Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) used to avoid a CEQA analysis did not apply, that there was a potential for significant impacts from an influx of bicycles, and that we were likely to prevail on the merits should the case go to trial.

Probably recognizing that they had little chance to prevail in court, MMWD abandoned the trail-sharing project and agreed to conduct CEQA review should it decide to reinstate the project. MMWD agreed to limit its pilot project to e-bikes on roads only and to collect data on plants, trails, bats, northern spotted owl, and other aspects.

We look forward to being part of the first CEQA environmental review of recreational use in the Mt. Tam Watershed.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Marta Alsterlind, Miriam Arnold, Gilbert Badilla, Ken Bigos, Rosalyn Brandt, Janet Brown, Joanne M. Canellos, Mary Carminati, Sharon Coil, Michael Deklerk, MacKenzie C. Ganz, Cori Godfrey, Angelique Goodhue, Paul Herrerias, Robert Jacobs, Isabel Jensen, Lisa Kelly, Kathleen Kluse, Caroline Kreitzberg, Janet Lehua, Eugene Mc Attee, M. McDonough, Allison Neves, Deborah Rowland, Erica Schrey, Livia Stone, Shauna Strait, Wyatt Toolson, Fredric K. Vieth, Rick C. Zimmerman

OBSERVERS AND INITIALS: VS: Valerie Sleeper, DM: Dominik Mosur, PW: Philips Whitlow, JW: Jim White, LN: Larry Nigro, SH: Steve Hunter, VW: Viviana Wolinsky, RW: Robert Wheat, DS: Dan Singer, DSE: David Sexton, TP: Todd Plummer, DH: Dan Habig, WL: William Legge, JA: James Allen, SP: Steve Popper, AB: Andrew Burke, BJS: Benny Jacobs-Schwartz, CC: Connor Cochrane, BB: Brian Browne



The Rail

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SAVE THE DATE

October 9 **Speaker Series:** Aves Argentina
7 PM *With Hernan Casanas*

October 15 **Field Trip:** Rodeo Lagoon
7:30 AM *William Legge and
David Wiechers*

November 1 **Field Trip:** Las Gallinas
8:30 AM and Hamilton Wetlands
With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Check website for updates and details

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SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY — BECOME A CHAPTER-SUPPORTING MEMBER

We invite you to become a Chapter-Supporting member of Marin Audubon Society (MAS) to support our important habitat protection and restoration work, conservation advocacy, our full calendar of birding field trips and speakers and our newsletter, *The Rail*. Marin Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon (NAS). However, becoming a **Chapter-Supporting Member** of MAS is separate and distinct from a membership in NAS. While MAS works with NAS on issues of mutual concern, we are a separate non-profit Section 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization. Marin-based NAS members do receive this MAS newsletter, *The Rail*, however we encourage all NAS members to also become Chapter-Supporting members of MAS to support our local work. Very little of our funding comes from NAS, and we rely on our MAS Chapter-Supporting members and donors to help us fund our land acquisitions, restorations, habitat protection, conservation advocacy, this newsletter and our local programs.

If you're not already a Chapter-Supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors and relatives to join us, too.

You can join MAS or make a donation on our website using your credit card or PayPal by going to www.marinaudubon.org. Alternatively, you can join by filling out this form and sending us your payment by mail.

ALTERNATIVELY, IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO JOIN NATIONAL AUDUBON FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MAS will receive 100% of your initial membership if you enter **MAS's chapter code C04** on your application. To join, go to www.audubon.org/join.

The best option for the birds: Join MAS **and** NAS.

Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

Please fill in this form and mail to the address below. If you are paying by check, please make it payable to **Marin Audubon Society**.

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